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## REVIEWS.

Ergebnisse und Aussichten der Homeranalyse von HANS FISCHL.

Wien und Leipzig 1918. Buchdruckerei und Verlagsbuchhandlung Carl Fromme. 8°, 84 pp.

The book is remarkable for its sensible ideas, clearly conceived and excellently expressed. It begins with a criticism of the search for objective criteria—linguistic, mythologic, historic or archeologic; but the author, concluding from past experiences that the prospect of finding such criteria is pretty slim, soon turns to the *Kompositionskritik*. It is (according to Cauer) the sovereign of this domain—holding however a limited monarchy and needing the support of the objective criteria. To test its value Fischl contrasts the two most recent analyses of the Iliad—those of Bethe (1914) and Wilamowitz (1916). This constitutes (pp. 16-75) the bulk of the book, and is very well done.<sup>1</sup> His conclusion (p. 73) that it is impossible in this way to rise above subjective probability to objective truth seems fully warranted. Only the emphasis is to be put on "in this way," which means the making of the *Kompositionskritik* an absolute monarch. At this point there opens a pitfall into which Unitarians regularly tumble. Fischl avoids it and draws (p. 76) the correct conclusion so neatly that his words deserve to be quoted in full:

"Wir teilen daher auch keineswegs die Ansicht der Unitarier, dass, insolange nicht eine vollkommen befriedigende Theorie über die Entstehung durchgeführt sei, die Interpretation von der absoluten Einheit von Verfasser und Werk ausgehen müsse. Das Versagen der Analyse bedeutet noch lange nicht eine vollständige *restitutio in integrum* für die 'homerische Frage.' Die Lösungen sind zwar missglückt, aber die Probleme dennoch vorhanden. Die zweifellos nachgewiesene Mannigfaltigkeit und das Durcheinander aus verschiedensten Zeiten stammender sprachlicher, stofflicher und kultureller Bestandteile gestattet nicht, an eine völlig freie Schöpfung im Sinne einer modernen Dichtung zu denken. . . ."

Fischl's own position (p. 80) is that the Iliad is the product of a freely creative imagination working largely in dependence on traditional forms, and with a large use of material already cast into shape. The problem is to understand the peculiar attitude of the poet to his material. The hope of a complete analysis is a will-o'-the-wisp, but one that has led scholars along paths on which they have obtained a deep insight into the historical development of the epic material and of the epic language.

The basic difference between Fischl and myself is that I am

<sup>1</sup> The elaborate attempt (pp. 56 ff.) to establish the indivisibility of A is, however, not convincing.

not convinced by his arguments intended to show that our knowledge of the development of the epic language cannot lead to a distinction between older and younger portions of the Iliad. At the most, they show the need of extreme care in the selection and application of such criteria. That is to be gladly conceded, altho the "warnendes Beispiel" (p. 6) is far from terrifying. It is that curious concatenation of blunders around the question of the distribution of the abstract nouns in Homer, of which I have treated in *Class. Phil.* 14 (1919) 328-337 and *Class. Journ.* 15 (1920) 368-369. The gravest blunders are those of Scott and Rothe, who practically reduce the difference between the Iliad and Odyssey to zero. Croiset's statement, taken literally, is open to criticism; but on the main issue, the increase of these words in the Odyssey, he is correct. The increase is no less than 32 per cent. when compared with the whole Iliad, and no less than 42 per cent. when  $\Theta\text{IK}\Psi\Omega$  are excluded from the comparison.<sup>2</sup>

The issue in the 'Homeric Question' it must be remembered, is simply whether it is possible to frame a hypothesis which can do what the Unitarian hypothesis most obviously cannot do—provide a reasonably satisfactory explanation for the existence of the Iliad. The first demand to be made of such a hypothesis is that it shall bring the linguistic peculiarities of the Iliad into line with our knowledge of the historical development of the epic language. The work, chiefly of Bechtel, has already shown in my opinion that this can be done only by assuming that roughly speaking one-fifth of the Iliad is older than the remainder.<sup>3</sup> Only at this point can the *Kompositionskritik* intervene. It must determine in the first place the interrelation of the various materials comprised in the older stratum. Here one fact is evident: this stratum can be followed consecutively for long stretches in AAHP but shortly after the beginning of  $\Sigma$  it disappears, in these portions we must recognize fragments of an Iliad. The rest of the stratum probably includes fragments of this and fragments of other poems. To sort these out and to reconstruct the poem or poems involved is the first task of the *Kompositionskritik*. Obviously there can be no hope of a "complete solution," but on the larger issues a high degree of probability may be attained.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Croiset's statistics agree so closely in detail with the usage of the remaining nineteen books that only *Judaeus Apella* could believe the coincidence accidental.

<sup>3</sup> The assumption is confirmed by the observation that only "Mycean" armor is found in this fraction of the poem.

<sup>4</sup> Such study may lead to rectifications of the boundaries of the older stratum. Fischl, p. 6, objects to such a procedure, but without sufficient reason. If the hypothesis can be framed to fit the facts of both sorts, so much the better; only, when the two clash, the linguistic criteria as the more objective must be given the right of way.

The remaining four-fifths of the poem is a second field for the *Kompositionskritik*, and fortunately it is one in which the problems lie nearest to the surface. Consequently the analysts here show at least an approximation of views on certain fundamental questions—for instance their general attitude towards  $\Theta\text{IK}\Psi^2\Omega$ . At times the agreement goes much further, as might be shown by the treatment of  $\Upsilon$  353— $\text{X}$  394 in Robert and in Wilamowitz. Nor does every divergence of the critics bring us to a dead centre—that is a thought of the Unitarians fathered by their wishes. Often it is possible and then a duty to decide between them—even when our decision must be based solely on stylistic impressions and our analysis of the composition. Further progress must depend upon the discovery of archaeologic or linguistic criteria which may limit in this field too the possibilities of the analysis. It would be rash either to predict or to deny that such discoveries will be made—but I may confess that I am personally optimistic.

Still more confidently may progress be looked for from another quarter. Fischl (pp. 76 f.) lays his finger on the fatal flaw in Drerup's work:<sup>6</sup> it ends in the belief that  $\text{E}$  as we have it has not changed a hair's breadth from the form in which it issued from Homer's hand. He might have applied a somewhat similar criticism to Bethe, who in practise handles Wolf's edition as identical with that of Aristarchus, and 'in general' identifies the latter with the Peisistratean *attisches Urexemplar*. The latter is the real object of our study (cf. Bethe, p. 53) and what is needed is a more systematic effort at its restoration. Otherwise we shall be like archaeologists discussing the authorship of a vase before its cleansing. The material has often been discussed,<sup>6</sup> but the discussion has been piecemeal, has been entangled with hypotheses about the analysis of the poem, and has generally misunderstood the problem and consequently dated the interpolations much too early. A separate approach, made methodically step by step, should prove fruitful; external evidence alone can carry us far,<sup>7</sup> and can show us how to proceed still farther. We should be able to reach a rather definite agreement about the *attisches Urexemplar*, which will be a new and sounder basis for the discussion of the genesis of the poems.

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<sup>6</sup> With his criticism, compare my remarks AJP 35 (1914) 129-132, and more generally Prentice's brilliant review AJP 34 (1913) 332 ff.

<sup>7</sup> Wilamowitz' consideration of it is one of the best features of his book.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. my articles: The Archetype of Our Iliad and the Papyri AJP 35 (1914) 125-148, The Latest Expansions of the Iliad AJP 37 (1916) 1-30, The Latest Expansions of the Odyssey *ibid.* 452-458.